

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

**OBSTRUCTION REMOVAL**

(acre)  
**CODE 500**

**DEFINITION**

Removal and disposal of unwanted, unsightly or hazardous buildings, structures, vegetation, landscape features, trash, and other materials.

**PURPOSE**

To safely remove and dispose of unwanted obstructions and materials in order to apply conservation practices or facilitate planned use of abandoned mine lands, farms, ranches, construction sites, and recreation areas.

**CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE  
APPLIES**

On land where existing obstructions interfere with planned use and development.

**CRITERIA**

Rock piles, boulders, stones, fences, hedgerows, abandoned buildings and structures, trash, and similar obstructions that would interfere with planned use and development shall be removed.

All debris such as broken concrete and masonry, structural steel and wood, stone, stumps, slash, and sterile or toxic soil material shall be disposed of so that they will not impede subsequent work or cause damage to offsite or other areas. Disposal shall be by burning, burying, or removing to an approved landfill in an environmentally acceptable manner.

All required gully shaping shall be performed to specified dimensions and grades. Gully fills shall be compacted to the required density.

The cover over buried materials shall be designed to be adequate for the planned use, treatment, and vegetation.

Historical or archaeologically significant and scenic values shall be identified and preserved as appropriate.

Appropriate erosion control measures shall be applied on disturbed areas.

This practice will only be used as part of a complete conservation management system. Other practices will be applied on the same land as appropriate. These practices may include Critical Area Planting (342), Cover Crop (340) and others.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

Effects upon components of the water budget, especially effects on volume and rate of runoff, infiltration, evaporation, transpiration, deep percolation, and ground water recharge.

Effects on the visual quality or downstream water resources.

Short-term and construction-related effects on the quality of water resources.

Potential uncovering or redistributing toxic materials such as saline soils.

**PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

Plans and Specifications for Obstruction Removal shall be in keeping with this Standard and shall describe the requirements for applying and achieving the practice purpose.

**OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

Provisions shall be made as necessary for operations and maintenance requirements and may include a formal plan for larger or more complex designs.

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service.